

**Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board
and
Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Board of Directors
Joint Meeting**

**Wednesday, December 10, 2003
Sheraton Richmond West
Richmond, Virginia**

Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board Members Present

David L. Moyer
A. Dewey Bond
Donald O. "Spec" Campen, Jr.
Robert M. Hall
W.P. "Billy" Johnson

Joseph H. Maroon
Linda S. Campbell
M. Denise Doetzer
Susan Taylor Hansen
Granville Maitland

Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Board Members Present

Greg Evans, President
Jim Byrne, 1st Vice President
Wilkie Chaffin, Secretary-Treasurer
Herbert L. Dunford, Jr. Area III Chair
Keith Seward, Area VI Chair
Bob Dixon, NACD Board Member

Daphne Jamison, Past President
Ricky Rash, 2nd Vice President
Charles E. Horn, Area I Chair
Richard P. Chaffin, Area V Chair
Mike Altizer, Area IV Chair

Staff Present

William G. Browning
Jack E. Frye
Barry Hughes
Stuart Wilson

Michael R. Fletcher
Lee Hill
Susan Block

Others Present

Jack M. Hodges, Blue Ridge SWCD
Mary Johnson, Thomas Jefferson SWCD
G. Dan Pace, Blue Ridge SWCD
Ray Dorsett, NRCS
Michael J. Russell, Robert E. Lee SWCD
Jim Boland, VASWCD

Call to Order

Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board Chair David Moyer called the meeting to order. He thanked members for attending and commented that the Association Annual Meeting had been productive and informative.

Mr. Moyer asked members and guests to introduce themselves.

Report from the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Mr. Moyer called on VASWCD President Greg Evans to give the report from the Association.

Mr. Evans said that on behalf of the Association, he wanted to thank both Mr. Bond and Mr. Moyer for their work with the Board and the Association. Terms for both will be expiring in June.

The Association recommended the names of the following candidates to be forwarded to the Governor for consideration.

Area II

John Baldridge
Richard McNeer

Culpeper SWCD
Culpeper SWCD

Area III

Lloyd Mundie
Archer Ruffin, Jr.

Three Rivers SWCD
Colonial SWCD

Chairman Moyer noted that, with the concurrence of the Board, these names would be forwarded to Governor Warner for consideration.

Mr. Evans expressed congratulations to Mr. Browning for his new position as Director of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management. He thanked Mr. Browning for his work with Districts.

Mr. Evans noted that all of the officers of the Association were reelected.

Mr. Evans gave an overview of the Associations legislative agenda for the 2004 session. Items included were:

- The VAWSWD needs to establish a position on the location in the *Code of Virginia* of the Agricultural Stewardship Act.
- The role of Districts in the Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Programs should be defined.

- The VASWCD supports the strengthening of the Silvicultural Water Quality Act.
- The VASWCD supports a level of mandatory stormwater management throughout Virginia and further that Stormwater Management Programs for the Commonwealth of Virginia are consolidated with in the Department of Conservation and Recreation.
- Clarification needs to be made as to who is responsible for assisting soil and water conservation districts with legal matters.
- VASWCD supports the strengthening of the Agricultural and Forestal Districts Act to include: protection from potential local eminent domain declarations, uniform availability throughout Virginia, and stronger emphasis on landowner responsibilities for the life of the contract with the County.
- VASWCD authorizes the Board of Directors to consider supporting the transfer of Biosolids Program from the Department of Health to the Department of Environmental Quality.

Mr. Evans stated that funding issues were grouped in three priorities. Essential Funding includes those items of the greatest priority to operate district programs. High Priority Funding are those items needed by districts to meet their goals and objectives in support of state programs. Support Funding Priorities are those programs important to soil and water conservation districts but the lead role would be initiated by another organization.

Essential Funding

1. Support efforts to appropriate \$7.7 million from the FY2003 surplus to the Water Quality Improvement Fund for point and nonpoint source pollution control programs.
2. VASWCD authorizes the Board of Directors to consider supporting tax reform in Virginia if it increases funding for the Natural Resources Secretariat.
3. Funding for agricultural best management practices and technical assistance at a minimum of \$5 million per year.
4. Funding for district dam rehabilitation \$1,185,000 for the 2005-2006 biennium for South River (Augusta Co.), and Leatherwood (Henry Co.) Watersheds.
5. Funding for soil survey and mapping at a level of \$690,000 per year.
6. Increase funding from the state for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program to meet the state obligations. This would generate 80% federal funds for implementation. It is related to the Chesapeake Bay Agreement and waters identified under the Total Maximum Daily Loads program. (\$500,000 FY 2005; \$1,700,000 FY 2006)
7. Funding for district operations at an additional \$500,000 per year to restore the level of services provided in previous years including support of \$100,000 to offset the operational costs of the Big Sandy SWCD.

High Priority Funding

1. Funding for district dam operation and maintenance at a level of \$208,000 per year and \$200,000 per year for minor periodic rehabilitation.

2. Restore funding for Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act farm planning at a level of \$500,000 per year.
3. Funding for an additional Shoreline Erosion Control Engineer at the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).
4. Oppose legislative attempts to remove tax credits related to conservation programs.
5. Funding to initiate a new district financial management system at \$70,000 per year for 3 years (FundWare by Intuit – may be funded from General Funds or through VITA).

Support Funding Priorities

1. Support the restoration of a second position at the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to implement the Agricultural Stewardship Act at a level of \$55,000 per year.
2. Support funding for Virginia Tech to support 39 Extension Agents and 17 Extension and Research Specialists at a level of \$3 million per year.
3. Support the restoration of full funding of the Virginia Reforestation of Timberlands Program and funding for restoring 30 positions for the Virginia Department of Forestry.
4. Support the reinstatement of funding to the Department of Environmental Quality to the Save Our Streams Program for water quality monitoring.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board

Wednesday, December 10, 2003

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Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board Members Present

David L. Moyer
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Staff Present

William G. Browning
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Michael R. Fletcher
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Susan Block

Others Present

Greg Evans, President, VASWCD
Daphne Jamison, VASWCD
Jim Byrne, VASWCD
Jack M. Hodges, Blue Ridge SWCD
Ray Dorsett, NRCS

Call to Order

Chairman Moyer called the meeting to order and declared a quorum present.

Minutes of the October 14, 2003 Meeting

MOTION: Ms. Hansen moved that the minutes of the October 14, 2003 meeting be approved as submitted.

SECOND: Ms. Campbell.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Subcommittee on the Future of Districts

Mr. Maitland distributed minutes from the November 17, 2003 meeting of the Subcommittee on the Future of Districts (copy attached as attachment #1)

Ms. Campbell noted that the goal of the committee was to identify for the Board areas of consideration regarding the structure and the future of Districts. She noted that this was the beginning and that the work of the committee needs to continue.

Mr. Moyer noted that there are additional issues to be addressed. He noted that the demographics of Districts are changing and that there are more cities wishing to be a part of a District.

Mr. Maroon noted that it would be beneficial for the Subcommittee to propose a list of actual items that the Board can address.

Ms. Campbell said that while the subcommittee addressed the financial issue that there are larger issues to be addressed.

Speaking for the Association, Mr. Evans agreed with the assessment of Ms. Campbell. He noted that the Association would appreciate the opportunity for the subcommittee to continue and to be able to prioritize the issues.

Mr. Moyer asked the subcommittee to continue meeting and to bring to the full Board a prioritized list of issues to be addressed.

Director's Report

Mr. Maroon expressed appreciation for the work done by the Association.

Mr. Maroon noted that he had recently attended a meeting of the Chesapeake Bay Council. Governor Warner now chairs this group. The Council estimates that approximately \$19 billion is needed to meet current goals.

He noted that that Governor would present his proposed budget on December 19. The Governor has proposed a tax reform plan to address the \$1.3 billion deficit in the state budget. Without this, there will be a need for additional spending reductions.

Mr. Maroon said that legislation is being put forward in the General Assembly session that would link the Erosion and Sediment Control program with Stormwater regulations. This legislation would impact the responsibilities of the Soil and Water Conservation Board.

Local Urban Programs Update

Mr. Wilson presented an update regarding the Montgomery County Erosion and Sediment Control Program.

MOTION: Ms. Campbell moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board commend Montgomery County for successfully improving the County's Erosion and Sediment Control Program to become fully consistent with the requirements of the Virginia Erosion and Sediment Control Law and Regulations thereby providing better protection for Virginia's soil and water resources.

SECOND: Mr. Maitland.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wilson presented a recommendation concerning the approval of the Culpeper County Alternative Inspection Program.

MOTION: Mr. Campen moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the proposed Alternative Inspection Program for Culpeper County as being consistent with the requirements of the Erosion and Sediment Control Law and Regulations and that the Board request the DCR staff to monitor the implementation of the alternative inspection program by the County to ensure compliance.

SECOND: Ms. Hansen.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wilson presented a motion regarding the approval of the 2004 Annual Standards and Specifications for Utility Companies.

MOTION: Mr. Campen moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board receive the staff update concerning the review of the 2004 annual standards and specifications for electric, natural gas, telecommunications and railroad companies. The Board concurs with staff recommendations for conditional approvals of the 2004 specifications and the approval of requests for variances for the

utility companies listed below in accordance with the Erosion and Sediment Control Law. The Board requests the Director to have staff notify said companies of the status of the review and conditional approval of the annual standards and specifications and variance requests.

The three items for conditional approval are:

1. A revised list of all proposed projects planned for construction in 2004 must be submitted by January 15, 2004. The following information must be submitted for each project:
 - Project name (or number)
 - Project location (including nearest major intersection)
 - On-site project manager name and contact information
 - Project description
 - Acreage of disturbed area for project
 - Project start and finish dates
2. Project information unknown prior to January 15, 2004 must be provided to DCR two (2) weeks in advance of land disturbing activities by e-mail at the following address LinearProjects@dcr.state.va.us.
3. Notify DCR of the Responsible Land Disturber (RLD) at least two (2) weeks in advance of land disturbing activities by e-mail at the following address LinearProjects@dcr.state.va.us. The information to be provided is name, contact information and certification number.

Companies recommended for conditional approval with the above 3 conditions and minor editorial comments are:

Cable: Metromedia Fiber Network Inc. (MFN)

Railroads: CSX Transportation

Telecommunications: Level (3) Communications

Electric: Alleghany Power; Association of Virginia Electric Cooperatives (13 cooperatives – A&N, BARC, Central Virginia, Community, Craig-Botetourt, Mecklenburg, Northern Neck, Northern Virginia, Powell Valley, Rappahannock, Prince George, Shenandoah Valley, Southside); Old Dominion Power; Dominion Virginia Power.

Gas: Atmos Energy Corporation; Colonial Pipeline; Columbia Gas; Duke Energy Gas Transmission; Enerdyne-Waverly Gas Corporation; Plantation Pipeline.

SECOND: Ms. Campbell.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carries unanimously.

Lake Martin Update

Mr. Wilson noted that while the Lake Martin case had been finalized in Circuit Court, they are awaiting the final order from the Circuit Court judge. The county was awarded a settlement of \$650,000, which the contractors immediately appealed to the Virginia Supreme Court. The Virginia Supreme Court would not consider hearing this until sometime in the spring.

City of Roanoke Petition to Join the Blue Ridge SWCD

Mr. Meador indicated that the petition by the City of Roanoke to join the Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District was reviewed by the Office of the Attorney General and was determined to meet the requirements set forth in the *Code of Virginia*.

Mr. Frye noted that the petition included land owned by the City (known as Carvin's Cove) that actually is in Botetourt County and a part of a separate Soil and Water Conservation District.

Mr. Jack Hodges, Chair of the Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District indicated that the District has no problem with the City of Roanoke becoming part of the District. However, there are concerns over the property already contained in another district.

Ms. Daphne Jamison of the Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District indicated that the City has informed the District that they do not wish the property in question to be a deterrent. She asked if the issue could be resolved in the public hearing.

Mr. Maroon noted that, since the Board was meeting again in January, perhaps the Board should ask the City to clarify their petition.

MOTION: Mr. Campen moved that the issue of the City of Roanoke Petition be tabled until the January meeting, allowing time for the City and the Blue Ridge District to respond to the question of the Carvin's Cove property.

SECOND: Ms. Hansen.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

District Director Elections, Resignations and Appointments

Mr. Meador indicated that there was no need for Board action on resignations and appointments.

He noted that 36 of 47 districts held elections in 2003. Out of 174 open seats, only 20 did not have someone qualify for the ballot. However, with write-in votes, all 174 certified a director-elect.

Lake Barcroft WID Trustee

Mr. Meador presented information regarding the need to appoint a new Trustee to the Lake Barcroft Watershed Improvement District.

MOTION: Mr. Bond moved that, upon the recommendation of the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District and in accordance with state law (§ 10.1-623 of the *Code of Virginia*), the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board appoint Charles W. de Seve as trustee of the Lake Barcroft Watershed Improvement District, effective December 10, 2003 to fill the trustee position vacated by the resignation of Leonard A. "Dave" Alne and that the Board Secretary be instructed to notify the Lake Barcroft WID.

SECOND: Mr. Campen

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Dam Safety Certificates and Permits

Mr. Browning presented the following Out of Compliance dams.

05906	Lake Accotink	Class 1 Regular
05910	Lake Fairfax	Class 2 Regular
08703	Gillie Creek	Class 2 Conditional

No Board action was required.

Mr. Maroon noted that it would be beneficial to have Districts keep their eye open for possible dams that should be included in the Dam Safety system.

Mr. Browning presented the following Operational and Maintenance Certificate Recommendations:

00905	Pedlar River	Class 2 Regular	12/31/09
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01923	Woods Landing	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
02911	Muddy Creek Dam #1	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
02912	Muddy Creek Dam #2	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
02913	Slate River Dam #2	Class 2 Regular	12/31/09
02933	Slate River Dam #14	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
02934	Slate River Dam #13	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
02935	Slate River Dam #8	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
02940	CVWSC	Class 2 Construction	12/31/09
03703	Roanoke Creek Dam #35A	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
03704	Roanoke Creek Dam #68	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
03705	Roanoke Creek Dam #5B	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
03706	Roanoke Creek Dam #6A	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
03707	Roanoke Creek Dam #49A	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
03708	Roanoke Creek Dam #62	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
03709	Roanoke Creek Dam #67	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
03710	Roanoke Creek Dam #4A	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
03711	Roanoke Creek Dam #61A	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
03712	Roanoke Creek Dam #31B	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
03713	Roanoke Creek Dam #54	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
03715	Roanoke Creek Dam #43A	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
05919	Fox Lake	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
06102	DiGiulian	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
06114	Johnsons	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
06524	Tenaska Virginia Generating Station Detention Pond	Class 3 Construction	12/31/09
06707	Melody Lake	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
06914	Summit	Class 1 Conditional	12/31/05
07914	Twin Lakes Dam #3	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
07915	Green Mountain Lake	Class 2 Conditional	4/30/04
08912	Horse Pasture Ck. Dam #1C	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
09525	Beechwood	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
10701	Beaverdam Creek	Class 2 Regular	12/31/09
10703	Goose Creek	Class 2 Regular	12/31/09
10728	Haynes	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
10922	Izac Lake	Class 3 Conditional	12/31/05
13505	Hamilton	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
15312	Silver Lake	Class 3 Regular	12/31/09
15504	Hogan	Class I Conditional	12/31/04

MOTION:

Ms. Hansen moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Operation and Maintenance Certificate Recommendations as presented by DCR staff and that staff be directed to communicate the Board actions to the affected dam owner. Further the Board authorizes conditional permits to be

granted for up to and no more than the time specified in the staff recommendations.

Mr. Browning presented the following dam for permit recommendations.

10738 Red Cedar Lakes Lake Two	Class 3 Construction Permit	12/10/05
17917 Celebrate Virginia	Class 3 Construction Permit	12/10/05

MOTION: Ms. Hansen moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Permit Recommendations as presented by DCR staff and that staff be directed to communicate the Board actions to the affected dam owners.

SECOND: Mr. Hall.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Browning presented the following 24 dams for extension recommendations.

00908	Graham Creek Reservoir Dam #1	Class 2 Regular	March 2004
01515	Camp Shenandoah	Class 2 Regular	March 2004
01519	Coles Run	Class 1 Regular	March 2004
01922	Ivy Hill	Class 1 Regular	March 2004
01932	Lake Ridge Drive	Class 3 Regular	March 2004
03102	Timber Lake	Class 2 Regular	March 2004
03507	Stewarts Creek – Lovills Creek Dam	Class 1 Regular	March 2004
04905	Clements	Class 3 Regular	March 2004
05923	Pohick Creek Dam #2	Class 1 Regular	March 2004
06521	Fluvanna Women's Institution	Class 3 Regular	March 2004
06702	Upper Blackwater River Dam #4	Class 1 Conditional	March 2004
07525	Lake Dillon	Class 3 Regular	January 2004
07909	Reynolds Farm	Class 3 Regular	March 2004
09908	Darr Pond	Class 3 Regular	March 2004
10929	Woolfolks Dam #1	Class 3 Regular	March 2004
13502	Epes	Class 3 Regular	March 2004
14312	Arey	Class 3 Regular	March 2004
14321	Brushy Mountain	Class 3 Regular	March 2004
14505	Upper Beyers	Class 3 Regular	January 2004
14718	Mottley	Class 3 Regular	January 2004
14735	Bush River Dam	Class 1 Regular	January 2004
17908	Lake Arrowhead	Class 2 Regular	March 2004
19502	Big Cherry	Class 1 Conditional	January 2004

MOTION: Ms. Campbell moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Extension Recommendations as presented by DCR staff and that staff be directed to communicate the Board actions to the affected dam owner.

SECOND: Ms. Hansen.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Maroon noted that the presentation of the Dam Safety Certificates and Permits had clearly demonstrated progress made in the Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management. He commended Mr. Browning for his work.

Bylaws

Mr. Maroon noted that bylaws with draft revisions were provided in member packets. The bylaws will be considered at the January meeting.

Partner Agency Reports

Department of Conservation and Recreation

Mr. Frye gave the report for the Department of Conservation and Recreation. (Copy attached as Attachment #2).

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Mr. Dorsett presented the report for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (Copy attached as Attachment #3).

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Other Business

Mr. Hall issued an invitation for the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board to meet at Breaks Interstate Park in Buchanan County.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board will be Friday, January 23, 2004 at the NRCS offices in Richmond.

Mr. Maroon noted that the meeting will begin at 11:00 a.m. and will include a working lunch. The Board will reconvene at 1:00 p.m. for the Agricultural Stewardship Act hearing.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

David L. Moyer
Chairman

Joseph H. Maroon
Executive Secretary

Attachment #1

DRAFT MINUTES

**Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board
Subcommittee on the Future of Districts**

**Monday, November 17, 2003
Virginia Department of Forestry, Charlottesville, VA**

Subcommittee Members Present

Granville Maitland, VSWCB, Committee Chair
Linda Campbell, VSWCB
Jim Byrne, Culpeper SWCD
M. Denise Doetzer, NRCS
Jacki Easter, USDA-FSA
Greg Evans, VASWCD
Daphne Jamison, Blue Ridge SWCD, VASWCD
Christa Pierpont Lightburn, Culpeper SWCD
Bob Tudor, John Marshall SWCD
Ricky Rash, VASWCD
Hudson Reese, Halifax SWCD
Alison Sappington, Thomas Jefferson SWCD
Donald L. Wells VASWCD

Others Present

Michael R. Fletcher, DCR
Michael Foreman, Department of Forestry
Stephanie Martin, VASWCD

Call to Order

Chairman Maitland called the meeting to order and thanked members for attending. He asked that members introduce themselves.

Mr. Maitland said that this meeting began Phase II of the committee work. The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board has approved the policy submitted by the committee.

Mr. Maitland presented an outline "Why Tree" for discussion. Copy attached as Attachment #1.

Mr. Maitland thanked Mr. Foreman for his assistance in holding the meeting at the Department of Forestry. He noted that Mr. Foreman would facilitate the discussion.

Minutes of July 14, 2003 Meeting

Mr. Wells moved approval of the July 14, 2003 minutes as submitted.

Ms. Campbell seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Facilitated Discussion

Mr. Foreman gave an overview for the structure of discussions.

Mr. Evans noted that it would be helpful for members to understand the current fiscal situation in the Commonwealth. He noted that Governor Warner was attempting to define an additional \$1.5 billion in budget reductions.

Mr. Foreman divided the members into four groups. The groups met and reported as follows:

Group #1: What is the role and vision of Districts

- Districts need a strong voice
- A strong committee system (agriculture, education, marketing, etc.) through the Association which can give advice and guidance to local Districts.
- Better use of technology (web, teleconferencing, etc.)
- Education information broadened from youth to adult and disseminated from District Education Coordinators
- Realignment study. Geographical/political boundaries need to be studied. Is there a better way to organize?
- Recognize urban influence on mission
- Prioritize goals
- Focus on accomplishments
- Does District law need to be changed?
- Perception of SWCD as NPS and not Agriculture on state level. Funding comes from Agriculture
- Funding does not meet “purpose”
- Need to redefine roles

Group #2: What is the Optimum Configuration of Districts?

- Bay vs. Non-Bay
- Local funding
- Land use issues
- Watersheds
- Workload/size
- Commonality of issues
- All cities and counties need to be within a SWCD

Group #3: SWCD Funding – Core funding vs. size

- Districts need tools for requesting more money from local governments
- Core funding – additional sources: user fees, new partners, government and industry
- Increase core funding to include education
- Share employees among Districts
- Areas do the hiring – pooled funds
- Contract employees – look at remove service
- Define a role for SWCDs in education
- Matching funds from the SWCB for education

Group #4: How to SWCDs Manage Political Change?

- More long range plan for stable core funding
- Prove that we're putting projects on the ground.
- Need for long range planning
- Educate legislators for need for line item core funding that cannot be touched.
- Need to formalize existing relationships with political subdivisions and forge new relationships

Wrap Up

These items for discussion will be presented at the Association meeting in December and then presented to the Soil and Water Conservation Board on December 10.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board Subcommittee on the Future of Districts

November 17, 2003

“Why Tree”

1. Why were Districts formed?
 - A. Original function
 - B. What role did they play?
 - C. What role do they play today?
Changes up until today and changes to come
2. Number of Districts
 - A. How many in the beginning (23) and why?
 - B. How many today (47) and why?
3. Staffing
 - A. How were Districts staffed then and why?
 - B. How are Districts staffed now and why?
4. What changes (if any), do we need to make and why?
5. Is there a need for more staff? Why?
 - A. At what cost?
 - B. Benefits of more staff.
 - C. Can we carry out our mission with today's personnel?
 - D. How can we better utilize our present staff?
 - 1) Geographically
 - 2) Locally

Attachment #2*Department of Conservation and Recreation
Report to the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board*DCR/SWCD Grant Agreements for FY04 Operational Funding

Monthly disbursements of operating funds continue to be issued to districts. All 47 districts have signed a grant agreement with DCR and have been issued an allocation each month through (and including) November 2003. No change in this disbursement process is anticipated this fiscal year.

For the current fiscal year (FY04), total operational funding for all districts is \$3,932,240, which reflects a slight increase above FY03 operational funding that totaled \$3,812,965. However, FY04 funding is still roughly 8% less than the full funding level experienced by districts in FY01 (\$4,301,000).

Agricultural BMP Cost-Share Program

This program year the new funds are comprised of \$275,000 from the Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant and \$134,080 from the Dredging Fund of Virginia Marine Resources Commission. CDCs continue to work closely with districts to ensure funds are allocated and utilized where needed.

The Agricultural BMP Advisory Committee met on November 6, 2003 in Charlottesville and further discussed the value and effectiveness of livestock winter-feeding facilities, as well as the potential use of a loafing hot system for horses. Two ad-hoc subcommittees will explore these needs and report back to the full committee during their next meeting.

On December 1st, DCR staff delivered a training event on state Agricultural Incentive Programs, BMP loan programs, and CREP which was geared primarily for new district staff. The session was well attended with 24 district and partner representatives present.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

As of November 25, 2003, statewide program totals reflect 2,176 approved contracts with 17,974 acres of riparian buffer (comprised of: Chesapeake Bay – 982 contracts, 10,202 acres, Southern Rivers – 1,194 contracts, 7,772 acres). Revisions to the Chesapeake Bay and Southern Rivers CREP agreements between the Commonwealth and the USDA have been completed to accommodate a new herbaceous buffer practice (CP-29), and are awaiting review and signature. Efforts to record program easements continue with the Potomac Conservancy, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and the CREP Manager all working with different CREP participants.

With achievements of the riparian buffer goal of 10,000 acres approaching in the Southern Rivers, the USDA Farm Service Agency has issued a memo to all Southern Rivers County Executive Directors emphasizing that CREP acres are limited and to apprise program participants that applications taken now and in the future are not guaranteed to be approved and funded.

SWCD 4-Year Program and Resource Plan

CDCs continue to discuss options for SWCD longer term planning during monthly district meetings. A new SWCD 4 Year Program and Resource Plan approach is one option for district consideration as each district determines what approach it prefers with longer term planning.

Three regional meetings were conducted as follows: November 3rd (Wytheville Community College), November 18th (Richmond – Dorey Park) and November 25th (Charlottesville – DOF), 2003. The 3 identical meetings covered explanations of long term planning options, available facilitation and planning, resources, and created opportunity for exposure to group facilitation and moderating focus groups. Each session averaged approximately 20 SWCD members (staff and/or directors). 39 (out of 27) districts sent representatives. Evaluations by attendees consistently reflected ratings of “very good” for the overall sessions. A step-by-step planning manual for the new planning approach was distributed during each session, along with additional printed resource materials.

Conservation Partner Training Efforts

Through efforts of the Joint Employee Development (JED) state team, plans continue with delivery of training events on 3 “core” courses for the benefit of district staff and other conservation partner agencies.

- NRCS delivery of the *EP&I* (Effective Presentation & Instruction) training program is planned for two regions of the state this fall/winter. Two training teams have been established; a third may be formed.
- DCR delivered the *Conservation Selling Skills* fundamentals course for 31 participants on November 5th and 6th (2003) at Dorey Park (near Richmond). Attendees reflected outstanding ratings for the quality and utility of information presented by professional trainer Chuck Hitzemann.
- The third “core” course pertains to a regional approach for delivery of *Conservation Orientation for New Employees*. The program (developed under the leadership of Ken Carter) was piloted as 4 day program in Service Units 4 and 8 last summer and more recently the course was delivered in southwest Virginia. Other regions of the state will offer the course when sufficient needs exist.

SWCD Audit Services

The accounting firm of Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates (RFCA) has completed audits of 25 SWCDs and is preparing individual district audit reports. A closeout discussion between RFCA and DCR staff is scheduled for December 17th. Overall results and findings by auditors will be presented at that time. Audited districts should anticipate receiving their final audit report through their CDC during a monthly district meeting this winter.

DCR staff with assistance from RFCA have finalized revisions to the SWCD Desk Top Guide for Fiscal Operations and have added guidance to better address financial reporting by SWCDs.

Training on the revised Guide for district staff and directors is scheduled for delivery during the VASWCD Annual Meeting (December 9th, 1 to 3 p.m.). Auditors rely on the Guide as a basis for performing district audits.

Clean Water/Bay Friendly Farm Award Program

DCR continues to encourage districts to participate in this farm recognition program this calendar year. Elimination of program funding causes DCR to squeeze dollars from other sources to cover essential expenses (signs, certificates and brochures). Grand Basin Award recipients for 2003 will be announced by DCR on December 9th during the Awards Luncheon scheduled during the VASWCD Annual Meeting.

Development of Virginia's 2004 Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant

Planning is underway to develop projects and activities for funding with Virginia's portion of an EPA grant program which is shared among states within the Bay watershed. Virginia has relied upon these federal funds (which annual total approximately \$2 million) for over 15 years to

support many Bay related activities. One initiative under development for the coming year includes an important role for district directors. They would assist DCR staff in targeting local government leaders (boards of supervisors and city council members) with messages that aim to strengthen understanding of the Commonwealth's commitment towards fulfilling the related goals established within the multi-state Chesapeake 2000 (C2K) Agreement, highlighting the Tributary Strategies and the role of local governments in achieving those commitments.

The approach under development will be to schedule short, concise presentations during regular meetings of county/city government leaders to ensure important messages are conveyed. A number of localities will be scheduled during the coming year such that every local government within the Bay portion of the state can be reached within a 2 or 3 year period and thereafter on a recurring cycle of annual contracts. DCR would like to partner with Bay SWCDs to develop, refine and present information in a shared arrangement. Districts that choose to partner with DCR will receive some amount of financial compensation to offset staff and director expenses.

Stormwater Management

As one outcome of the Governor's Natural Resources Partnership Agenda earlier this year a study has been underway for several months to consider options for streamlining stormwater management functions among several key agencies. While a report from this study is not available for public distribution, it went to the Governor for his consideration. Meetings among state agencies (DCR, DEQ, CBLAD) have been ongoing. Consideration may be given to moving constructions permits for Phase I and II (land disturbances greater than 1 acre) and MS4 (municipal separate storm sewer system) permits to DCR (from DEQ) which will require significant legislative and program changes if done. Under changes being considered there may be opportunities for SWCDs to partner more closely with local governments and especially with MS4 which includes public awareness and education activities. Consideration may also be given to recommending establishment of statewide stormwater requirements by localities.

Miscellaneous Topics of Interest

- The City of Roanoke has submitted a petition to the Virginia Soil & Water Conservation Board seeking realignment of the Blue Ridge SWCD to include Roanoke City and land owned by the City (12,700 acres) that lies in Roanoke and Botetourt counties. The Board will discuss this matter during their next (December 10th, 2003) scheduled meeting.
- Members of a small community in Fairfax County have petitioned the Northern Virginia SWCD to establish the Piney Branch Watershed Improvement District (WID). The Northern Virginia SWCD will be conferring with DCR staff and others as it proceeds to fulfill its role with WID formation.

Attachment #3

**NRCS Report
Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board
December 10, 2003
Sheraton Richmond West
Richmond, VA**

NRCS Budget

We are under a Continuing Resolution through January 31, 2004. It is anticipated that an omnibus budget bill will be passed.

FARM BILL PROGRAMS

Staff is currently working on making changes to the Farm Bill programs for FY-2004. The local working groups across the state were asked to provide input on the EQIP and WHIP programs. The comments have been received and are being analyzed and incorporated into program changes. Plans are being made to streamline the WHIP paperwork process. Several new practices will be added to the EQIP program. We anticipate a much larger participation level from private sector technical service providers, primarily in nutrient management.

WATERSHED PROGRAMS AND DAM REHABILITATION

Flood Recovery in Virginia – NRCS has completed most of the flood damage assessment reports resulting from Hurricane Isabel, except for ongoing assessments in the City of Chesapeake, and York and Page Counties. To date, there are 7 counties, 2 cities and the U.S. Forest Service with eligible EWP sites. The cost of EWP repairs are estimated at approximately \$2 million. The request for funds has been placed on a wait list until an Emergency Supplemental Appropriation is approved by Congress.

NRCS has already completed 13 urgent and compelling sites in Augusta County (3 sites) and Page County (8 sites), Madison County (1 site), and U.S. Forest Service (1 site) totaling approximately \$58,000.

November Storm – Heavy rains moved into the Commonwealth on the morning of November 11, 2003 causing significant problems with flooding in Tazewell, Smyth, Bland, Rockbridge, Pulaski, Giles, Bath and Buchanan Counties, and the cities of Galax and Radford. Governor Warner declared a State of Emergency for those jurisdictions. Additional localities may be added in the near future.

NRCS has conducted some preliminary damage assessments and determined there are potential EWP sites in several southwest Virginia counties. Additional site visits and damage survey reports will be conducted in the near future. A request for EWP funding will be made to the NRCS National Headquarters.

Dam Rehabilitation

A public information meeting was hosted by the Headwaters SWCD for the Dam Rehabilitation projects in that district and was held in Lyndhurst on October 30. Speakers included Headwaters SWCD Chairman Charles Horn, Augusta County officials, VA Dam Safety, VA DCR and the NRCS State Conservation Engineer. The meeting was held to provide information to the public about the rehabilitation efforts for Tom's Branch, Inch Branch and Robinson Hollow dams located in Augusta County. It is required that federal funds be matched with 35% non-federal dollars. Local sponsors area charged with seeking these funds through state and local sources.

OUTREACH

Small Farmer Conference at VSU – VSU has organized this two-day event (December 15-16) with an expectation of 200 participants. On December 16, Denise Doetzer will provide a presentation on NRCS services and incentive cost-share programs for limited resource and new farmers.

SOIL SURVEY

VA Tech Agreement – VA NRCS entered into an agreement with Virginia Tech relative to "Developing a Soil Decision System for Septic Tank Absorption Fields." This project will develop tools utilizing the National Soil Information System and Arc View.

Statewide Important Farmlands in Virginia – The State Legislature passed the "Preservation of Important Farmlands" bill during the 2003 session. The bill allowed the state agencies and local governments with the cooperation of USDA to designate state and locally important soils. These lists can be used to qualify for USDA programs such as the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP). To assist, NRCS developed criteria and ran reports through the NASIS database to generate reports for a statewide list. This list covers all of our Virginia counties and cities with a completed or correlated soil survey.

Electronic Field Office Tech Guide – We have completed data population for all published surveys. This allows access to soils information over the internet by the general public as well as our field service centers.

Competitive Sourcing

No studies are being conducted in Virginia for FY-2004. However, there are some states where studies will be performed.

Personnel Changes

Mike Faulk, District Conservationist was reassigned from Smithfield to Lawrenceville, effective November 2, 2003.

Two Resource Conservationist positions were filled to provide conservation planning training and quality assurance. Tansel Hudson will work out of the Smithfield TAST and serve offices in Service Units 5 & 9. Gene Harris will work out of the Christiansburg TAST office and will serve offices in Service Units 6 & 7.

John Womack was appointed as District Conservationist in Amelia, effective November 2, 2003.

Dana Bayless was appointed as District Conservationist in Goochland effective November 2, 2003.

David Roberts was appointed as RC&D Coordinator in Charlotte Court House, effective August 24, 2003).

Candy Dearborn was appointed as Secretary (replacing Vickie Botkin) on the State Resource Conservationist's Staff in Richmond, effective September 9, 2003.

Four Soil Conservationist career intern appointments were made in October for Wytheville (Lori Hillman), Verona (Jane Shaw), Dinwiddie (Willard Moss) and Gloucester (Cory Culliams).

The South Center Corridors' RC&D Secretary position in Prince George was filled by Angela Claiborne.